THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The Indian research establishment have made good progress commensurate with the investments made in various frontier areas of technologies such as micro-electronics, robotics, nano-technologies etc. For example, some of the achievements have been the development of high temperature superconducting magnets and robotics for remote handling applications to mention a few.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise

Nano-technology

2074. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in Nano-technology, the international corporate spending by firms like IBP, HP, Motorola, GE, etc. has risen to $ 3.8 billion in 2004;

(b) whether there is any such research attempt on the part of Indian firms; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to assist the R&D in the area?

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In India also, some major corporates like Mahindra and Mahindra, Tata Chemicals, Reliance Industries, Reddy's Labs, Murugappa Chettiar Group, Orchid Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals, etc. have started investing in Nano-technology research at a modest level. Mahindra and Mahindra and Reliance have also established Nano-technology centres.

(c) the Government has been taking several steps to promote R&D in this area. Over 100 research projects have been funded. Several centres of excellence on nano-science and Nano-technology have also been established. A number of post-doctoral fellowships have been awarded. Several national and international conferences, schools, etc. have been organized. The Government has spent approximately Rs. 200 crore over the past 5 years to promote R&D in this area. A bigger

Nano-Science and Technology Mission is being launched which will provide further boost to this area in a comprehensive manner including nano-technology development through increased public-private partnerships and entrepreneurial ventures.

Implementation of National Policy for Older Persons in Andhra Pradesh

2075. SHRIMATI N. P. DURGA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of measures taken by Government under the National Policy on Older Persons in Andhra Pradesh since the inception of the scheme;

(b) whether any monitoring mechanism has been put in place to oversee the implementation of the above programme; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Government of India adopted the National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP). Based on the directions of the Central Government, the State Government of Andhra Pradesh nominated the Commissioner, Disabled Welfare as nodal officer for implementation of NPOP in the State. Further, the State Government has also constituted State Council headed by the Chief Secretary for implementation of the NPOP. An action-plan has also been prepared involving all the State Government Departments and Non-Governmental Organizations for implementing various schemes. The State Government is also implementing Annapurna Scheme, Indiramma Programme and Old Age Pension Scheme. Further, 236 Old Age Homes, 57 Day Care Centres and 15 Mobile Medical Care Units are functioning in Andhra Pradesh. The World Elders Day was also celebrated at State level in Hyderabad on 1st October 2003 and 2004.

Allotment of residential flats/plots to SC/ST

2076. SHRI GANDHI AZAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any action has been taken by the National Commission for SC/ST after issuing letter No. 11/A 139/2003/E-1/UP dated 9th December, 2003 on issue of giving reservation in allotment of residential flats/plots to SC/ST;